FWP COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: March 8, 2012
Agenda Item: Future Fisheries Projects, Winter 2012 funding cycle
Division: Fish and Wildlife (Fisheries)
Action Needed: Approval of Proposed (Tentative) Rule X Approval of Final Rule/Action Endorse Course of Action None - information
only
Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 minutes

Background: The Future Fisheries Improvement Program continues to provide funds for projects that restore fishery habitats in streams, rivers and lakes for the benefit of wild fisheries. Applications are reviewed twice each year by a 14-member citizen review panel appointed by the Governor or his designee. Citizen Panel recommendations are forwarded to the Commission every six months for your consideration and approval. For the Winter 2012 funding cycle, the Citizen Panel recommends funding 10 of 13 submitted proposals at a Program cost of \$278,695.54. Matching funds or in-kind contributions from outside sources total \$1,014,641.00.

Public Involvement Process & Results: The public is informed about Program funding opportunities via news releases, a public meeting and information posted on FWP's website. The Future Fisheries Citizen Panel conducted a public meeting in Helena on January 5, 2012 to review proposals, discuss proposed projects with applicants in attendance and receive public comment. No public comment was received, except from applicants in attendance. All applications received for the funding cycle were posted on FWP's website, where there is an opportunity to submit on-line public comment. Three public comments were received as of February 23, 2012. Environmental Assessments (EA's) have been prepared for projects recommended for funding; except for those proposals that fall under categorical exclusions (defined under ARM), the federal National Environmental Policy Act, or ongoing regional processes. The comment period for drafted EA's will end on February 27, 2012. No public comment was received as of February 23. A summary of environmental analyses prepared for the Winter 2012 funding cycle and associated public comments are attached.

Alternatives and Analysis: (1) Approve funding recommendations as submitted by the Future Fisheries Citizen Panel; providing funds to assist in the completion of projects that will improve habitat for wild fish populations. (2) Disapprove or modify Future Fisheries Citizen Panel funding recommendations; resulting in partial completion or non-completion of habitat improvement projects that would benefit wild fish populations.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale: We recommend approval of the funding recommendations as submitted by the Future Fisheries Citizen Panel. Completion of these projects would benefit wild fish populations.

Proposed Motion: Move to approve the Future Fisheries Citizen Panel funding recommendations for the Winter 2012 funding cycle of the Future Fisheries Improvement Program.

private:stream Rev 9/03